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21 SEP 1955

Chief, Language and Area School

Director of Training

Language Development Program

1. Attached is a copy of my memorandum to [REDACTED] commenting on his recent report on the Language Development Program.

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2. In considering the substance of [REDACTED] report, I am acutely conscious of the growing need for clear-cut and meaningful Agency policies on language development. And I intend to press for such policies. As a preliminary move, however, we must marshal the facts and help develop the justifications for those policy actions we think ought to be taken.

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3. [REDACTED] has recommended, and I strongly concur, that the Committee for Language Development conduct an Agency survey of language requirements. This information is essential and the survey should begin without delay. Additionally, we must greatly accelerate our testing program so that an accurate inventory of the Agency's foreign language proficiencies can be completed as soon as possible.

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4. I am very much concerned that 2 1/2 years after our Language Development Program was launched we still have tested no more than 25 per cent of the Agency employees who claim language proficiency. It is imperative that this situation be rectified, and I would appreciate your taking immediate action to do so. In planning such action, you should consider among other things:

a. Increasing the frequency of tests. Until a goal of 75 per cent coverage is reached, written tests should be offered as frequently as possible in all languages for which pre-printed examinations are available.

b. Arranging for tests to be administered by local staffs at major field stations. Consultations with area divisions will indicate the extent to which this is feasible.

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c. Revising written tests to shorten the time required to complete them. The present 2-3 hour tests can undoubtedly be shortened without affecting their validity, especially for persons with limited skills.

d. Continue to make full use of LAS staff and contract personnel to administer oral tests. This will reduce the need for most testing panels and will simplify some of your administrative problems.

e. Requirements, if any, for assistance in administering and scoring written tests. Temporary assistants, especially from the A&E testing unit, can be detailed to your staff to help out if needed during peak periods.

f. Please let me have by 1 October a report of your actions along the lines indicated above.

SIGNED

MATTHEW BAIRD
Director of Training

Distribution:

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OTR/PPS [REDACTED] d (18 Sept 59)

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